

REMARKS

Claims 1-30 were pending in the Application. Applicants cancelled claims 1, 11 and 21 without prejudice or disclaimer. Hence, claims 2-10, 12-20 and 22-30 are pending in the Application. Applicants cancelled claims 1, 11 and 21 only to expedite the issuance of claims 2-10, 12-20 and 22-30 and not in response to the Examiner's cited art. Applicants are not conceding in this application that cancelled claims 1, 11 and 21 are not patentable over the art cited by the Examiner, as the present claim cancellations are only for facilitating expeditious prosecution of the subject matter (claims 2-10, 12-20 and 22-30) indicated by the Examiner as being allowable. Applicants respectfully reserve the right to pursue these (cancelled claims 1, 11 and 21) and other claims in one or more continuation patent applications.

In the present Office Action, the Examiner indicates that claims 2-10, 12-20 and 22-30 are allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants amended claims 2, 12 and 22, as indicated above, to be rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Hence, claims 2-10, 12-20 and 22-30 are allowable.

As stated above, Applicants amended claims 2, 12 and 22 to be rewritten in independent form and not to overcome prior art. Hence, no prosecution history estoppel arises from the amendments to claims 2, 12 and 22. *Festo Corp. v. Shoketsu Kinzoku Kogyo Kabushiki Co.*, 62 U.S.P.Q.2d 1705, 1711-12 (2002); 56 U.S.P.Q.2d 1865, 1870 (Fed. Cir. 2000). Further, the amendments made to claims 2, 12 and 22 were not made for a substantial reason related to patentability and therefore no prosecution history estoppel arises from such amendments. *See Festo Corp.*, 62 U.S.P.Q.2d 1705 at 1707 (2002); *Warner-Jenkinson Co. v. Hilton Davis Chemical Co.*, 41 U.S.P.Q.2d 1865, 1873 (1997).

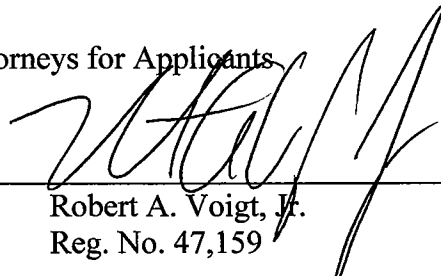
As a result of the foregoing, it is asserted by Applicants that claims 2-10, 12-20 and 22-30 in the Application are in condition for allowance, and Applicants respectfully request an allowance of such claims. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner call Applicants' attorney at the below listed number if the Examiner believes that such a discussion would be helpful in resolving any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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